

Serial No. 09/190,309
Resp. dated October 27, 2009
Reply to Office Action of July 27, 2009

PATENT
RCA89041
Customer No. 24498

REMARKS

The Office Action dated July 27, 2009 has been reviewed and carefully considered.

Claims 1-19 are pending. Reconsideration of the rejections is earnestly solicited.

Preliminarily, it should be noted that the Examiner has made redundant, cumulative rejections against claims 1 and 16. As MPEP § 706.02(I) states, "Prior art rejections should ordinarily be confined strictly to the best available art." Presenting cumulative rejections imposes an unnecessary and unfair burden on the Applicants in responding to the Examiner's assertions. Because the present case does not represent any of the three exceptions listed, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw one of the rejections with respect to claims 1 and 16.

Before addressing the particular deficiencies of the art which the Examiner has cited, it is worth noting that the Examiner seems to have an inaccurate understanding of the meaning of the word "synchronize." As Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary (hereinafter "Webster's") defines the word to mean, "to cause to indicate the same time, as one timepiece with another." (See attached.) In other words, synchronizing a clock with a particular time means *setting or changing the clock to that time*. This is the *plain meaning* of the term. Throughout the rejection, the Examiner has interpreted "synchronize" to include a mere comparison of clocks (i.e., determining whether the two clocks have the same time at that moment). However, such a comparison cannot be interpreted to mean *causing* the compared clocks to indicate the same time. This distinction will be made clear in particular examples below.

Claims 1-2, 4-6, 10-11, and 13-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,479,268 to Young et al. (hereinafter "Young").

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Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, "synchronizing the current time of day of the second scheduling clock with the current time of day of the clock of the second corresponding program source based on the second current time reference information prior to initiation of the second program processing function." Claim 16 recites analogous language. The Examiner asserts that Young teaches this element by comparing a system clock to a scheduled time. The Examiner states that, because the system time matching the scheduled time is a condition for performing a recording operation in Young, such a comparison naturally takes place prior to the initiation.

However, as described above, comparing a clock to a particular time *cannot* be reasonably interpreted as synchronizing a clock. As Webster's shows, synchronization of clocks involves *causing* one clock to show the same time as another. Simply observing whether this condition has naturally occurred does not suffice.

The Examiner may use only the broadest reasonable interpretation of a claim term. The Examiner's interpretation of "synchronize" is fundamentally at odds with the standard definition, and is therefore not reasonable.

As the present specification describes on page 6, lines 30–37, it is possible to have substantial differences in the clocks of varying program sources, and so it is advantageous to match the system's clock with that of the new program source in order to accurately time a subsequent initiation of processing. Young does not describe changing the system clock *prior to initiation of the processing function*. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that Young fails to disclose or suggest synchronizing the current time of day of a second scheduling clock with the current time of day of the clock of a second corresponding program source prior to initiation of a second program processing function.

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For at least this reason, it is believed that claims 1 and 16 are in condition for allowance. Because claims 2, 4–6, 10–11, 13–15, and 17 depend from claims 1 and 16 and include all of the elements of their parent claims, it is believed that all of claims 1–2, 4–6, 10–11, and 13–17 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejection is earnestly solicited.

Claims 1 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,208,799 to Marsh et al. (hereinafter "Marsh") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,801,787 to Schein et al. (hereinafter "Schein").

As noted above, this rejection is cumulative with the § 102(b) rejection based on Young. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner only issue rejections based on the best available art, per MPEP § 706.02.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, "synchronizing the current time of day of the second scheduling clock with the current time of day of the clock of the second corresponding program source based on the second current time reference information prior to initiation of the second program processing function." Claim 16 recites analogous language. The Examiner asserts that Marsh teaches this element in checking whether a scheduled time has arrived.

Just as with the discussion of Young above, Marsh simply shows a comparison of times and does not actually disclose or suggest synchronizing a clock prior to initiating a processing function. This fact is made abundantly clear by FIG. 7, step 83, which loops if the current time is not equal to a time stored in VCR-RECORD-TIMER.

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As described above, "synchronize" is defined as *causing* something to indicate the same time. There can be no synchronization if all that the reference is doing is passively waiting for two clocks to align.

Furthermore, Schein is simply introduced to show the use of multiple programming sources. Schein does not in any way deal with the synchronization of clocks. It is therefore respectfully asserted that Marsh and/or Schein, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest synchronizing the current time of day of a second scheduling clock with the current time of day of the clock of a second program source prior to the initiation of a second processing function.

It is therefore believed that claims 1 and 16 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejection is earnestly solicited.

Claims 3 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Young in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,619,274 to Roop et al. (hereinafter "Roop").

Claims 3 and 18 depend from claims 1 and 16 respectively and include all of the elements of their parent claims. Roop does not in any way deal with the above-discussed features of the independent claims. Therefore it is respectfully asserted that Young and/or Roop, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the elements of claims 3 and 18. In addition, however, claims 3 and 18 recite patentable subject matter separate and apart from that recited in the base claims.

Claim 3 recites, *inter alia*, "the system further comprises a filter for filtering the output to inhibit a discontinuous change in the current time reference information from causing a discontinuous change in the display of the current time-of-day, and for providing the filtered output to the display." The Examiner concedes that Young does not teach this

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element, but asserts that Roop teaches it in a discussion of setting a time for daylight savings changes.

However, the Examiner asserts that changing the time for daylight savings is somehow *preventing* a time discontinuity. This is patently false. Changing the clock for daylight savings time *necessarily* involves introducing a discontinuity of one hour. Indeed, the entire *purpose* of daylight savings time is to produce just such a discontinuity.

As such, rather than inhibiting a discontinuous change in the display of the current time, Roop explicitly provides a means for effecting such a change, and treats it as a distinct feature. It is therefore respectfully asserted that Young and/or Roop, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest filtering the output to inhibit a discontinuous change in the current time reference information from causing a discontinuous change in the display of the current time-of-day, or for providing such filtered output to a display.

For at least the above reasons it is believed that claims 3 and 18 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejection is earnestly solicited.

Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Young in view of Program and System Information Protocol for Terrestrial Broadcast and Cable (hereinafter "ATSC") and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,561,461 to Landis et al. (hereinafter "Landis").

The Examiner introduces ATSC and Landis to show certain details of the time reference information. However, neither of these references in any way deals with features discussed above with respect to Young alone. Because claim 7 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the elements of its parent claim, it is respectfully asserted that

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Young, ATSC, and/or Landis, taken alone or in any combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the elements of claim 7. It is therefore believed that claim 7 is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejection is earnestly solicited.

Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Young in view of ATSC.

The Examiner introduces ATSC solely to show certain details of time reference information. ATSC does not in any way deal with the features discussed above with respect to Young alone. Because claim 12 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the elements of its parent claim, it is respectfully asserted that Young and/or ATSC, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the elements of claim 12. It is therefore believed that claim 12 is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejection is earnestly solicited.

Claims 8-9 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Young in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,808,694 to Usui et al. (hereinafter "Usui").

The Examiner introduces Usui solely to show receiving two separate time references. Usui does not in any way deal with the features discussed above with respect to Young alone. Because claims 8, 9, and 19 depend from claim 1 and 16 and includes all of the elements of their parent claims, it is respectfully asserted that Young and/or Usui, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the elements of claims 8, 9, and 19. It is therefore believed that claims 8, 9, and 19 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejection is earnestly solicited.

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In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of the claims set forth in the Office Action of July 27, 2009 be withdrawn, that all pending claims be allowed, and that the case proceed to early issuance of Letters Patent in due course.

It is believed that no additional fees or charges are currently due. However, in the event that any additional fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the application, they may be charged to Applicant's representatives' Deposit Account No. 07-0832.

Respectfully submitted,

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October 27, 2009

WEBSTER'S NEW UNIVERSAL UNABRIDGED DICTIONARY

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Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, Second Edition

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This edition published by Barnes & Noble, Inc.
by arrangement with Random House Value Publishing, Inc.

2003 Barnes & Noble Publishing, Inc.

ISBN 0-7607-4975-2

Printed and bound in China by C&C Printing Co., LTD.

3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4

